

## **Historical funding for bicycle-pedestrian facilities and safety in Wisconsin**

This document provides a historic summary of bicycle and pedestrian projects funded in Wisconsin from 1993 to 2004 with additional information on ongoing WisDOT efforts incorporated into state highway projects and programs.

Bike and pedestrian travel is increasingly recognized not only for its recreational and health benefits, but also as a practical transportation alternative. Wisconsin is widely recognized for its quality biking facilities. Residents and visitors alike appreciate the thousands of miles of low volume country roads and the state's excellent trail system. Sparta, WI has tabbed itself as the "Bicycling Capital of America," while a national bicycling publication has often named Madison as one of the top ten bicycling cities in the country for its top-notch biking opportunities. The state's role as an active partner in support of bicycle and pedestrian activities includes: providing technical support and guidance to communities; safety-related educational resources; financial assistance to help local governments invest in bike and pedestrian facilities; and ensuring that the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are considered in state and federally-funded highway projects.

Since 1993, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has committed \$123.6 million in federal funds to 418 bike and pedestrian projects throughout the state at 80% federal funding with the balance of funding from local and state government partnerships. The primary sources of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects are from programs started in the early 1990s under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) that have continued in subsequent federal transportation acts. The programs are described below. A [table listing all of the projects funded since 1993](#) is available to download.

### **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program**

CMAQ was created in 1993 to encourage transportation alternatives that improve air quality. It includes efforts to enhance public transit, construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities, improve traffic flow and promote vehicle and fuel technologies that decrease emissions. Since 1993, \$38.2 million in federal CMAQ awards have been invested in 57 bicycle-pedestrian facilities throughout the southeastern Wisconsin ozone non-attainment and maintenance area.

### **Local Transportation Enhancement (TE) and STP-Discretionary (STP-D) programs**

In Wisconsin, the two programs have been collectively funded under the Statewide Multi-modal Improvement (SMIP) program. The TE program promotes projects that "enhance" the surface transportation system. There are 12 federally eligible categories, with bicycle and pedestrian categories typically making up about two-thirds or more of Wisconsin local project sponsors' requests. The STP-D program funds projects such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities that foster alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel. Since 1993, \$68.3 million in federal funds have been committed to 307 projects through SMIP related programs. Up until 1995, there was also a small Bicycle and Pedestrian

Facilities Program that was primarily used to fund bicycle planning related activities. Funding for the STP-D program was eliminated in the 2003-2005 state biennial budget.

**State Enhancements.** From 1999 to 2002, the state enhancement program was an effort to further utilize federal TE apportionments within state budget spending authority. State highway projects scheduled through 2006 were evaluated for TE eligible elements that could be added to state highway projects and corridors above and beyond what was normally incorporated into the projects. This effort resulted in the approval of \$17.1 million of federal funds for 54 bike and pedestrian related projects. Since then, WisDOT has developed a “Community Sensitive Design” (CSD) policy that promotes many TE type activities as standard practice on state highway projects that are funded as part of the project’s cost. As noted below, many bicycle and pedestrian related facilities are now a routine part of state highway projects.

### **Ongoing efforts benefiting bicyclists and pedestrians**

In addition to the specific projects and programs noted above, WisDOT invests millions of dollars annually on bike and pedestrian-related improvements as part of highway and bridge construction projects.

**Paved Shoulders.** Approximately 70% of our two-lane state highway system now has three-foot or five-foot paved shoulders to the benefit of bicycles and motorists. Approximately 250 miles of new paved road shoulders are added each year – partially to the benefit of bicyclists.

**Bicycle Accommodations on Bridges.** Nearly all newly constructed rural bridges have wide paved shoulders and most high cost urban bridges provide bike lanes or a separated path for bicyclists at an annual investment of about \$1 million.

**Sidewalk Construction.** Each year, WisDOT constructs or replaces about 15 miles of sidewalk and another two miles of sidewalk as part of bridge projects at an annual investment of about \$1.5 million. Additionally, an undetermined amount of funds are spent on curb ramps, median islands, and pedestrian signals that are often added to projects to help reduce the impact of street projects and are aimed at improving the crossing ease and safety of pedestrians.

**Education.** WisDOT invests about \$250,000 each year on bike and pedestrian education, safety and enforcement.